

WHITNEY

Press Release

Contacts:

Stephen Soba, Whitney Museum of American Art
Tel. (212) 570-3633, pressoffice@whitney.org

Elyse Topalian, The Metropolitan Museum of Art
Tel. (212) 570-3951, communications@metmuseum.org

Metropolitan Museum and the Whitney Announce Collaborative Agreement for Breuer Building

New York, May 11, 2011 – The directors of The Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Whitney Museum of American Art announced today that their boards of trustees have agreed in principle to a multiple-year collaboration projected to begin in 2015, when the Whitney opens its new museum facility on Gansevoort Street in downtown Manhattan. The Metropolitan Museum plans to present exhibitions and educational programming at the Whitney’s landmark building at 945 Madison Avenue, which was designed by Marcel Breuer, for a period of eight years, with the possibility of extending the agreement for a longer term. The two museums will seek to collaborate on collections sharing, publications, and other educational activities.

Adam D. Weinberg, the Whitney’s Alice Pratt Brown Director, said: “We are thrilled at the prospect of this long-term collaboration with the Met. Throughout our planning for the Whitney’s new building downtown we have committed ourselves to finding a distinguished museum partner for the Breuer building in keeping with its iconic stature. The Met is ideal in so many ways. I am sure that Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney, who initially offered her collection of American art to the Met before deciding to found the Whitney Museum, would be delighted that we are embarking on this unprecedented collaboration. We could not have found a better collaborator with respect to our beloved Breuer building while we re-establish our presence downtown, blocks from the Whitney’s original building in Greenwich Village. In the meantime, our vibrant program

of exhibitions and events will continue in the Breuer building over the course of the next four years.”

On behalf of the Metropolitan Museum, Director Thomas P. Campbell said: “We are extremely pleased to be able to enter into this collaboration. With this new space, we can expand the story that the Met tells, exploring modern and contemporary art in a global context that reflects the breadth of our encyclopedic collections. This will be an initiative that involves curators across the Museum, stressing historical connections between objects and looking at our holdings with a fresh eye and new perspective. This project does not mean that we are taking modern and contemporary art out of the Met’s Main Building, but it does open up the possibility of having space to exhibit these collections in the event that we decide to rebuild the Lila Acheson Wallace Wing where they are currently shown. The Whitney will open its new location in 2015, so I look forward to developing our ideas around this project in the intervening years. It is an amazing opportunity, filled with possibilities for our art and our audience.”

“This collaboration between The Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Whitney Museum of American Art, two of the world’s most esteemed cultural institutions, is great news for New York City,” said Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg. “Even after the Whitney opens its new downtown home, the historic Breuer building will continue to serve as an exceptional venue for exhibitions, lectures, and gallery tours, benefiting the millions of New Yorkers and visitors from around the world who enjoy world-class arts programming.”

During the term of the agreement, the Metropolitan Museum plans to provide programming in the Breuer building, including exhibitions, lectures, and gallery tours that present and interpret both contemporary and historical art in a global context. The Met would also provide amenities for visitors including food services and retail operations. The Whitney would retain use of some space in the building for art storage, as well as for site-specific works of art that will remain there on a permanent basis.

On May 24, the Whitney will break ground on a 200,000-square-foot building, designed by architect Renzo Piano. Located in the Meatpacking District on Gansevoort Street, bordered by the Hudson River and the High Line, the building will provide the Whitney

with essential new space for its collection, exhibitions, and education and performing arts programs in one of New York's most vibrant neighborhoods.

About the Whitney

The Whitney Museum of American Art is the world's leading museum of twentieth-century and contemporary art of the United States. Focusing particularly on works by living artists, the Whitney is celebrated for presenting important exhibitions and for its renowned collection, which comprises over 18,000 works by more than 2,800 artists. With a history of exhibiting the most promising and influential artists and provoking intense debate, the Whitney Biennial, the Museum's signature exhibition, has become the most important survey of the state of contemporary art in the United States. In addition to its landmark exhibitions, the Museum is known internationally for events and educational programs of exceptional significance and as a center for research, scholarship, and conservation.

Founded by sculptor and arts patron Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney in 1930, the Whitney was first housed on West 8th Street in Greenwich Village. The Museum relocated in 1954 to West 54th Street and, in 1966, inaugurated its present home, designed by Marcel Breuer, at 945 Madison Avenue on the Upper East Side. While its vibrant program of exhibitions and events continues uptown, the Whitney is moving forward with a new building project, designed by Renzo Piano, in downtown Manhattan. Located at the corner of Gansevoort and Washington Streets in the Meatpacking District, at the southern entrance to the High Line, the new building, which has generated immense momentum and support, will enable the Whitney to vastly increase the size and scope of its exhibition and programming space. Ground will be broken on the new building in May 2011, and it is projected to open to the public in 2015.

About the Metropolitan Museum

The Metropolitan Museum of Art is one of the world's largest and finest museums, with collections of nearly two million works of art that span 5,000 years of world culture, from prehistory to the present and from every part of the globe. The Metropolitan Museum, which was founded in 1870, is located at the edge of Central Park along Fifth Avenue in Manhattan, and received 5.24 million visitors last year.

Current and Upcoming Exhibitions at the Whitney Museum of American Art

Glenn Ligon: AMERICA	Through June 5, 2011
Dianna Molzan: Bologna Meissen	Through June 19, 2011
More Than That: Films by Kevin Jerome Everson	Through September 18, 2011
Breaking Ground: The Whitney's Founding Collection	Through September 18, 2011
Cory Arcangel: Pro Tools	May 26–September 11, 2011
Lyonel Feininger: At the Edge of the World	June 30–October 16, 2011
Xavier Cha: Body Drama	Opens June 30, 2011
Singular Visions	Through November 2011

The Whitney Museum is located at 945 Madison Avenue at 75th Street, New York City. Museum hours are: Wednesday, Thursday, Saturday, and Sunday from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., Friday from 1 p.m. to 9 p.m., closed Monday and Tuesday. General admission: \$18. Full-time students and visitors ages 19–25 and 62 & over: \$12. Visitors 18 & under and Whitney members: FREE. Admission to the Kaufman Astoria Studios Film & Video Gallery only: \$6. Admission is pay-what-you-wish on Fridays, 6–9 p.m. For general information, please call (212) 570-3600 or visit whitney.org.

###